



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH OF HASTINGS**  
LIVING A LEGACY OF LOVE

# Home Page Newsletter

## **Bearing the divine...**

Dear First Presbyterian Church Family:

The Season of Advent started on Sunday, December 3. We will spend four weeks in a space of expectation as we prepare our hearts and minds to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ 2,000 years ago and we wait with hope for Christ's return. During this season of Advent, we focus on the themes of peace, hope, joy, and love. We pray that you find this to be a meaningful time in your faith journey.

On Sunday, December 10, we will share an original choral cantata entitled "The Bearers of the Divine" that was written by our own church member Hannah Jensen-Heitmann. The cantata reflects on what Mary might have been feeling when the angel Gabriel told her that she would bear the Christ child and we read that, "...she was much perplexed by his words and pondered them." Who or what would Mary have turned to in order to process this message from Gabriel? The cantata imagines that Mary would have gone to the stories she knew, the stories of her spiritual ancestors, who were all asked to "bear the divine" in one way or another. The cantata shares the story of great women of the Bible who would have provided inspiration, support, peace, and hope for Mary as she accepted her role as the bearer of the divine. You will hear songs narrating the stories of Sarah, Shiphrah & Puah, Moses' Mother & Pharaoh's Daughter, Ruth & Naomi, Hannah, Esther, and Elizabeth, who all bring different strengths to Mary as she prepares for her role in the story of God coming to earth. You won't want to miss this incredible cantata and the stories that it shares, so we hope you can join us for worship on Sunday, December 10 at 10:30am in the sanctuary.

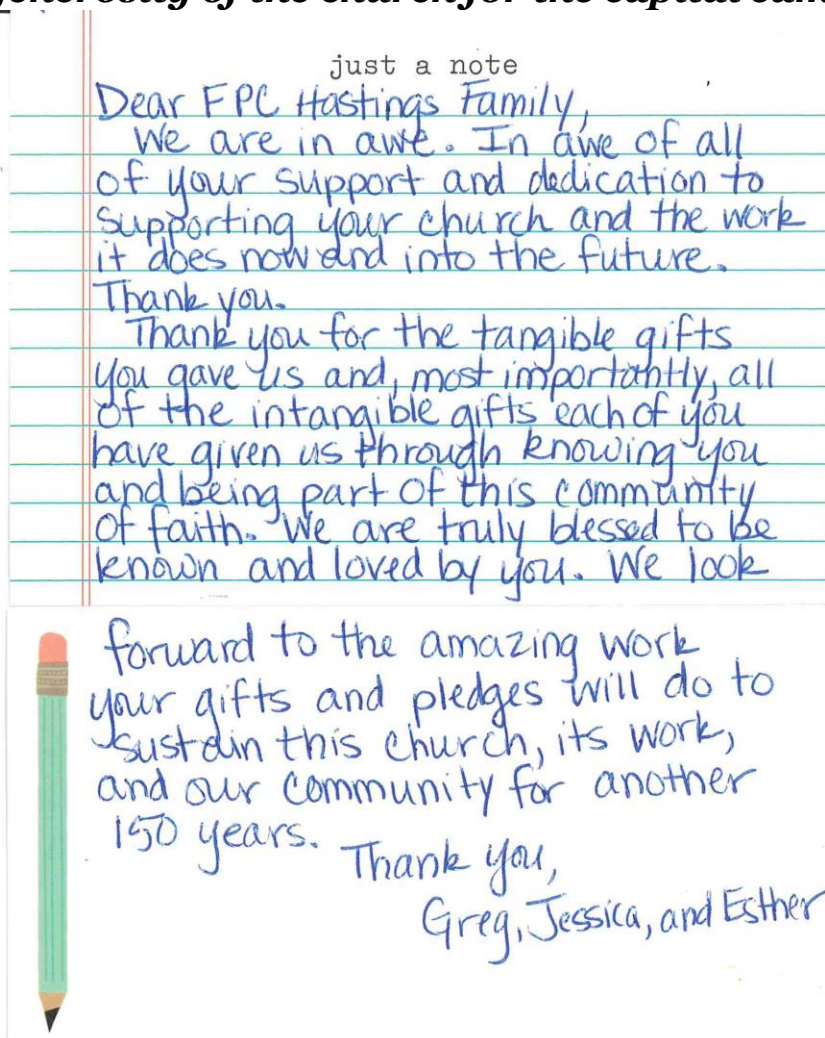
In addition to the cantata, we also have an Advent Devotional Guide written by Pastor Damen that picks up on the themes and stories in the cantata. A copy of the guide was mailed to every household in the church and should arrive in your mailboxes this week. We also have free digital copies of the Advent Devotional Guide available at this link: <https://bit.ly/Advent2023FPC>

In the devotional guide, you'll find a prayer for each day of Advent as well as a list of items that are needed by some of our vital ministry partners. Each day during the season, we invite you to take a moment, light a candle, recite a prayer, and place one of the items in a box in your home. Think of it as a "reverse Advent calendar." You may bring the items to the church on Sunday or during regular office hours and place them in the parlor. This year's items will go to benefit the following agencies: Hastings Public School Food Pantries, enCourage Advocacy Center, Crossroads Homeless Shelter, Maryland Living Center, and Toys for Tots.

We hope and pray that this season of Advent is a meaningful time for you and your family. Take some time to step away from the hustle and bustle of the holiday season and focus on what really matters, the story of Jesus' birth, and the peace, hope, love, and joy that it brings to the world. This Advent, may we prepare to encounter the God who meets us in our need by preparing us to meet others in their need.

Your Servant in Christ, Pastor Greg

***A thank you note from the Allen-Pickett Family  
for the generosity of the church for the capital campaign:***



**POINSETTIAS**

Poinsettias may be purchased in honor of or in memory of a loved one. The cost is \$15 each. Money raised over the cost will be donated to the Hastings Public Schools Foundation playground improvement fund.

Your donation makes a difference. Please return your order form to the church office as soon as possible.

Poinsettia in memory of:

Poinsettia in honor of:

Given by:

How many total poinsettias are you ordering?

I will leave my poinsettia(s) at the church:

☐ Yes

☐ No

## December Greeters

DECEMBER	MEMORIAL ROOM	NARTHEX	NARTHEX
3	Kim Hermann	Pat & Dick Kleiber	
10	Paul & Lynette Krieger	Clyde Sachtleben	Carolyn Nowka
17	Kathy & Curtis Reimer	Susan Hoff	Erin Gastmann
10:30am 24			
5:30pm 24			
7:30pm 24			
31	Milrae & Harold Korb	Cathy & John Pershing	

## December Ushers

### (Team 4)

Captain – George Howard  
 Susie Graham  
 Dixie McDonald  
 Gale McDonald  
 Lori Schroeder  
 Ted Schroeder



By giving to the Christmas Joy Offering on Christmas Eve, we honor God's gift of Jesus Christ by providing assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and developing our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.







## Please pray for



Brad Davis  
Elaine Schumacher  
Dave Schawang  
Renee Miller  
family of Rich Portwood  
Shirley Gass  
Audre Zaroban  
Carter Johnson  
Scott Johnson  
Tarah Davis & family  
Matt Campbell  
June Nielsen  
Neil Kerr and family  
Vernon Groves  
Carol Medsker  
Frances Kamler

Pam Canady  
Ashley Ibach  
Reta & Lowell Johnson  
Carl Utley  
Barry Thomson  
Stephen Gass  
Greg Howard  
Ken Fisk  
Mary Wolf  
family of Julie McDougal  
Everest Beacon (Zabloudil)  
Jacob Shin  
Jim Boeve  
family of Peter Duang  
Brett Epperson and family  
family of Joyce Mefford

Paul Nuss  
Vicki (Fisk) Nieves  
Dana Odom  
John Carllson  
Mary Giesler

## In memory of

Julie McDougal, who passed  
away on 9/27/2023  
Rich Portwood, who passed  
away on 10/5/2023  
Joyce Mefford, who passed  
away on 10/8/2023

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### Ushers and Greeters Needed

We are in need of ushers for the 5:30pm and  
7:30pm services on Christmas Eve.

We are also in need of greeters for the 10:30am,  
5:30pm, and 7:30pm services  
on Christmas Eve.

Please let Melissa know if you are able to help out.

([melissa@fpchastings.org](mailto:melissa@fpchastings.org) or 402-462-5147)

Thank you!



*December Communion Offering*  
Reverse Advent Donations and Giving Tree



**2024**  
**Book Discussion**  
*Group*

# JUSTICE and PEACE



DISCUSS THE BOOKS WITH OTHERS VIA ZOOM

• The J&P Book Discussion Group is open to all!



DISCUSSION GROUP MEETS EVERY OTHER MONTH

• Read and discuss any or all books that appeal to you. Registration will be needed to join the discussion on Zoom.



RECEIVE STUDY GUIDES TO INFORM YOUR READING

• Questions for discussion or reflection will be sent with your registration confirmation.

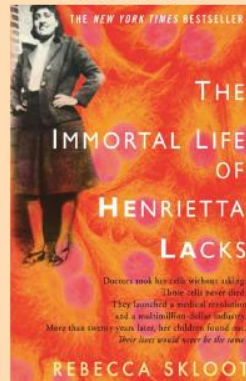


To register, scan the QR code  
with your smart phone or go to  
[presbyterianwomen.org/justice](https://presbyterianwomen.org/justice).

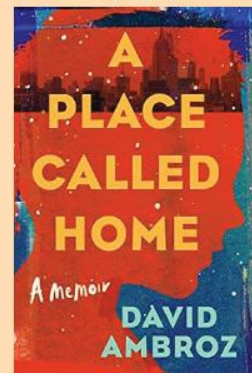
## Reading Selections

(6:30 PM – 8:30 PM Eastern Time)

JANUARY 8



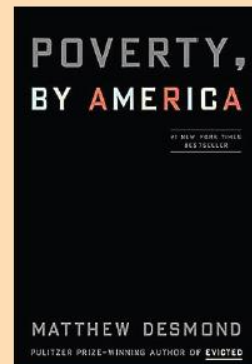
JULY 8



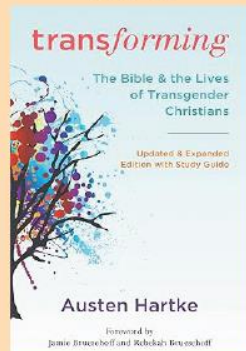
MARCH 11



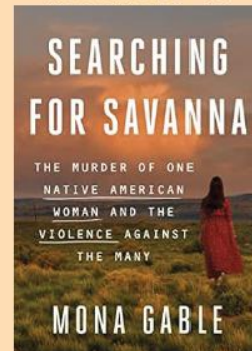
SEPTEMBER 9



MAY 13



NOVEMBER 11



Selections are recommended by  
the Justice & Peace Committee of PW's Board of Directors.



CHRISTMAS WITH THE  
*Cathedral  
Brass*

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17TH, 3:00PM  
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
HASTINGS, NE



**American  
Red Cross**

The American Red Cross and First Presbyterian Church  
are hosting a blood drive on  
Wednesday, December 27, from 12pm-6pm.  
There is a critical need for donated blood.  
Please consider making an appointment  
to give blood during this drive.  
To make an appointment go to  
[redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org),  
select the drive at  
First Presbyterian Church, Hastings,  
and make your appointment.



*"Building Houses, Building Hope"*  
P.O. Box 856 • Hastings, NE 68902  
402-462-5141

Board of Directors:  
Bruce Baker  
Jan Bolliger  
Doug Bruce  
Rev. Lance Clay  
Eric Gawrych  
Niki Gemar  
Neal Hoff  
Dale Janitscheck  
Crystal Johnson  
Patty Kneale  
Harold Korb  
Paul Larsen  
Dan McCarthy  
Carolyn McKenzie  
Sherri Patterson  
Laura Schneider  
Mamie Soderquist

November 17, 2023

Dear Rev. Greg,

The Board of Directors, the volunteers and homeowners of the Hastings Area Habitat for Humanity would like to thank you so very much for your participation in bringing the Cornerstone Concert to the First United Methodist Church on October 23. We are so grateful that you chose our organization as the recipient for the donations. The concert was amazing and everyone who attended enjoyed it very much.

These donations go a long way in helping to fund the building of homes which provide safe and affordable housing to families in need which is the Habitat philosophy of eliminating poverty and homelessness from the world by making safe and decent shelter a matter of conscience and action.

We thank you very much and appreciate your kindness to our organization!

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patty".

Patty Kneale  
For the Board

Please excuse the tardiness of this letter.



<b>Tuesday 12/5</b>	10:15am	Staff Meeting	In-person
	11:45am	Habitat for Humanity	Parlor
	12pm	Bible Study	Anderson Room
	5:30pm	WAM Meeting	Anderson Room
<b>Wednesday 12/6</b>	11-11:45am	PW Coord.	TBD
	11:45am	PW Program and Luncheon	Fellowship Hall
	1:30pm	Quilters	Peace Quilting Room
	5-7:15pm	PreK-12 <sup>th</sup> grade WNL	Various
	6:30pm	Woodcarvers	Basement
	6:30pm-8:30pm	Chancel Choir	Choir Room
<b>Thursday 12/7</b>	12:30pm	Dulcimer	Lydia Room
	6-8pm	Mexican Folkloric Dance	PEACE NE Classroom
	7-8pm	Cub Scouts	Scout Room
<b>Friday 12/8</b>	10am	Mahjong	Basement youth room
<b>Saturday 12/9</b>	8:15am-11am	Cantata Rehearsal	Sanctuary
<b>Sunday 12/10</b>	8:30am	Contemplative Worship Service	Chapel
	9:15am	Sunday School for all ages/Confirmation	Various
	10am	HAW Store Open	Narthex
	10:30am	Choral Cantata Worship Service	Sanctuary, Facebook, Radio
	11:30am	Pie Reception	Fellowship Hall



During the holidays our First Presbyterian Church family embraces brothers and sisters who are served by the Assertive Community Treatment program at South Central Behavioral Services in Hastings. The tags on the Giving Tree list items that would be appropriate for the person noted on the tag. Please select from the list one or two items as gifts. Then wrap the items, attaching the tag to the gift bundle. If you bring the gifts to place around our Giving Tree by Monday, December 18, volunteers will be able to deliver them in time for Christmas.

Of the individual recipients, most live independently in our community and some live with family members. Most of those who live independently have no family network, so our Christmas gifts are the only ones they receive. During the year, many also depend on food banks and donations of non-perishables and clothing.



<b>Sunday 12/10</b>	8:30am	Contemplative Worship Service	Chapel
	9:15am	Sunday School for all ages/Confirmation	Various
	10am	HAW Store Open	Narthex
	10:30am	Traditional Worship Service Christmas Cantata	Sanctuary, Facebook, Radio
	11:30am	Pie Reception	Fellowship Hall
<b>Monday 12/11</b>	1-3pm	First Pres. Pickleball	PEACE Gym
	1:30pm	Quilters	PEACE Quilting Room
	5:30pm	Global Mission Committee	PEACE NW Classroom
	6-8pm	Mexican Folkloric Dance	PEACE NE Classroom
	7-9pm	Chorus of the Plains	Choir Room
<b>Tuesday 12/12</b>	10:15am	Staff Meeting	In-person
	12pm	Bible Study	Anderson Room
	5:30pm	Congregational Life	Anderson Room
	5:30pm	Trustees	Confirmation Room
	6:45pm	Deacons	Anderson Room
<b>Wednesday 12/13</b>	12pm	Noonday Book Club	<a href="mailto:Sbbrooks52@gmail.com">Sbbrooks52@gmail.com</a> for the link
	1:30pm	Quilters	PEACE Quilting Room
	5pm	PreK-12 <sup>th</sup> Grade WNL	various
	6:30pm	Woodcarvers	basement
	6:45pm	Chancel Choir	Choir Room
	7:30pm	Chancel Bells	Bell Room
<b>Thursday 12/14</b>	12:30pm	Dulcimer	Lydia Room
	5pm	Personnel Committee	As needed
	6-8pm	Mexican Folkloric Dance	PEACE NE Classroom
	7-8pm	Cub Scouts	Scout Room
<b>Friday 12/15</b>	10am	Mahjong	Basement youth room
<b>Saturday 12/16</b>		United Harvest	
<b>Sunday 12/17</b>	8:30am	Contemplative Worship Service	Chapel
	9:15am	Sunday School for all ages/Confirmation	various
	10am	HAW Store Open	Narthex
	10:30am	Traditional Worship Service	Sanctuary, Radio. Facebook
	11:30am	HAW Store Open	Narthex
	3pm	Cathedral Brass Quintet Concert	Sanctuary

First Presbyterian Church

621 N. Lincoln Ave.  
Hastings, NE 68901

402-462-5147

fpc@fpchastings.org

Return Service Requested

***First Presbyterian Church of Hastings***  
***Sharing the love of Christ from the heart of Hastings since 1873***

**Head of Church:** Jesus Christ  
**Senior Pastor:** Rev. Greg Allen-Pickett  
**Organist and Music Director:** Linda Vollweiler  
**Chancel Choir Director:** Dr. Brett Epperson  
**Chancel Bells & Calvin/Westminster**  
**Bells Director:** Dr. Byron Jensen  
**Calvin/Westminster Choir Director:** Linda Johnson  
**Praise/Alleluia Choir Directors:** Tim and Teresa Canady  
**Praise/Alleluia Bells Choir Director:** Dr. Susan Oliver  
**Accompanist and Music Coordinator:** Mary Plock

**Ministers:** Members of the Church  
**Associate Pastor:** Rev. Damen Jensen-Heitmann  
**Director of Children & Family**  
**Ministries:** Rose Koepp  
**Church Office Administrator:** Melissa Davis  
**Facilities Manager:** Tony Calhoun  
**Bookkeeper:** Deb Hamburger  
**Scholar in Residence:** Dr. Dan Deffenbaugh  
**Pastor Emeritus:** Rev. Dr. Bill Nottage-Tacey